Setting up of Rural Information Technology Network

1151. SHRI N.R. GOVINDRAJAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal under its consideration regarding setting up of Rural Information Technology Network; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) The Department of Information Technology received a proposal from Government of Uttaranchal for setting up of 328 Community Information Centres (95 at the block level and 233 at village level) in the State of Uttaranchal. The estimated cost of the proposal is Rs. 85.6 crores over a period of four years.

Further Department of Information Technology is currently working on a Scheme to establish 100,000 Common Services Centres in rural areas across the country by the year 2007 which would leverage on the existing and planned communication network in the country.

Facilities to cellular users

1152. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that consumer can retain his cellular number by selecting any other cellular operator anywhere in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering to implement this facility in the country; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the obstacles therein for providing this facility to cellular users.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) At present, No Sir.

(b) and (c) The consumer can retain his cellular number by selecting any other cellular operator in case the facility of Mobile Number Portability (MNP) is introduced in the country. The Government is working towards introduction of number portability. However, the proposed measure is at initial stage. No time frame can be fixed for its introduction.